Under the Light of the Stones

In the village of Lendora, where the glow of the *Light Stones* shone day and night to keep the *Chaos* at bay, there lived a boy named Eren. Since he was little, he dreamed of becoming a **Dungeon Explorer**, one of those legendary adventurers who braved the depths of dungeons and returned with treasures and stories. While the other boys talked about following their parents' trades or opening shops in the city, Eren spent hours staring at the horizon, imagining himself slaying *Chaos Monsters* and carving his name into the records of the great heroes.

But dreams didn't pay the entry fee for the Adventurers' Guild exam. So, when he turned fourteen, he started helping his father—a simple miner—hauling stones and cleaning tunnels lit by the dwindling energy of the *Light Stones*. Together, they extracted mana fragments to sell in town, and little by little, Eren saved every coin, knowing his future depended on them.

Years passed. When he turned eighteen, Eren finally had enough to pay for the test.

The exam wasn't easy. Facing weakened *Chaos* creatures in a controlled environment, resisting the mental attacks of the darkness, and demonstrating basic combat skills. But with determination and courage, he passed. He received his first adventurer's emblem and smiled like never before. The first part of his dream had come true.

The problem came right after. Finding a guild.

The big guilds laughed at him. A boy with no real experience, no rare magic, no enchanted weapons... no one wanted to risk contracts on someone like him. After weeks of knocking on doors, he finally got accepted into a tiny guild called **Broken Lantern**, made up of failed adventurers and rookie dreamers.

Eren didn't mind. It was a start.

Forming a party was even harder. Most people didn't last more than a single mission. Until he met three people as strange as he was.

First came **Kael**, a red-haired mage who claimed to hear whispers from the *Chaos* and loved blowing things up for no reason. Then there was **Thara**, a dark elf who handled daggers with the delicacy of someone weaving silk—mysterious and guarded, rarely speaking of her past. Lastly, **Brunn**, a giant warrior with more muscle than brain, who was terrified of the dark (ironic, for someone who raided dungeons).

No one would have bet a single coin on that group. But, against all odds, it worked.

They started with small dungeons, clearing areas infested with weak *Chaos Monsters*. Every expedition was a challenge, but they always came back alive and with a few coins in their pockets. Little by little, they built trust. They learned the signs of danger, the sounds *Chaos* made when it drew near, and the traps hidden in the shadows.

Eren never became the world's greatest Dungeon Explorer. He never had a statue raised in the central square, nor was he summoned by the king for special missions. But inside the dungeons, alongside his friends, he found something better.

He found a place where he belonged.

And, in time, he also found love. Thara, with skin as dark as the night the world had lost, confessed that *Chaos* had taken her family and, for a long time, living had become nothing more than a hollow habit. But with Eren, she found purpose again. Between ambushes and laughter around the campfire, the two grew closer until sharing a life felt as natural as splitting the loot from a dungeon.

And that’s how Eren fulfilled his dream. Not as the greatest, not as the best, but as someone who earned the freedom to explore, to live, to love.

Under the eternal glow of the *Light Stones*, with the *Chaos* whispering just beyond the light’s reach, he was happy.

And, in the end, that was all he ever really wanted.

*Inspired on the game **Dungeon Explorers**.*